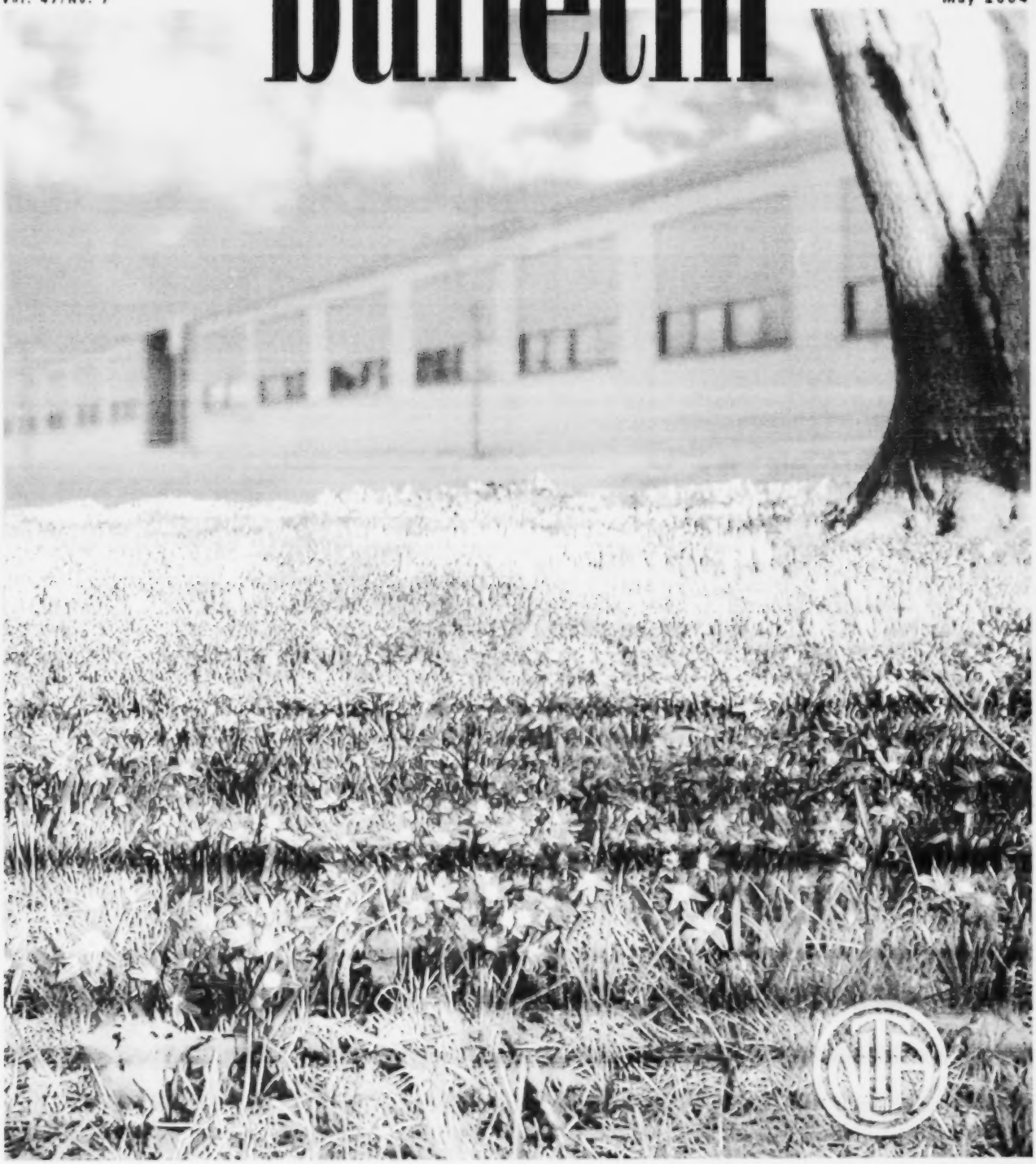
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

THE bulletin

Vol. 47/No. 7

May 2004



Family Gatherings

by LESLEY-ANN BROWNE

As I sit at my home computer (on a much needed day off but working none-the-less) writing this editorial, the Easter weekend is behind us, the public sector strike is before us, and the hope of better things to come and warm weather are ahead of us. I have this unfounded belief that I should be cleaning my home from top to bottom – something to do with spring cleaning – but luckily I had to write this editorial.

My home over the Easter weekend was almost like Christmas. There was no tree, there were no decorations, and only a scattered present, but my family was home to visit. Since they live in various parts of Canada and the United States, their visits are very special. Luckily this year they traveled here in December and were able to do the same again in April. Times with family are getting more and more precious as we age and realize that our parents may not be around for very much longer. I am not being morbid here, just facing a reality that many of my friends and colleagues have had to deal with in the last few months. Someone said that we are the sandwich generation – in between raising our children and worrying about and taking care of our aging parents.

Much of the conversation at the family gatherings over the Easter weekend was about the public sector strike. It was interesting to get an outside view of the events and a perspective of people who no longer live in this province. While there was some discussion, the opinion was very much the same among all and that is that government is/was being unreasonable. Actually, the words were a little stronger than that but the message was the same. We even discussed the usefulness of unions, from where they originated and if there is a necessity for them today.

This made quite an interesting discussion since my brother and his wife are members of one union and I work for another. These views combined with the American perspective and that of Central Ontario made an interesting assortment of opinions and viewpoints. I would have been remiss if I had not managed to include a few lectures on the lack of resources in education, the loss of teachers in the recent budget and of course the issue of teacher workload.

Of course these weren't the only discussions but they were certainly a central focus. Like most families we have our arguments and disagreements, but it is wonderful to get together even for a short time. We hope to see each other again in December.

It is great to see the snow melting away and although I am writing from the Avalon portion of the province I am confident that it is disappearing in other areas as well. I hope that by the time this issue of *The Bulletin* goes to print, the snow will have disappeared, the bulbs I planted will be in bloom, that one last snow fall doesn't kill them like last year, and of course that the public sector strike will be a thing of the past.

bulletin

Lesley-Ann Browne
Editor

Michelle Lamarche
Editorial Assistant

Linda Babstock, John Bishop, Elliott Green, Louise King
Design • Printing • Distribution

Linda Farrell
Online Services

The Bulletin is published eight times a year during the school year by the Nfld. and Labrador Teachers' Assn., 3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 1W1.
Tel: 709-726-3223; 1-800-563-3599
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582
e-mail: labrowne@nlta.nl.ca
Internet Address: www.nlta.nl.ca

Unless otherwise indicated, materials used in *The Bulletin* may be reproduced or broadcast without permission. Advertisements and/or notices of resources carried in this publication do not imply recommendation by the Association of the service or product. Advertising inquiries should be directed to: Michelle Lamarche, Ext. 227, mlamarche@nlta.nl.ca

Subscription Rate: $16 per year. For subscriptions and address changes contact Printing Services, Ext. 249.

Deadlines for material are:
June Issue: May 1
Sept/Oct Issue: September 6

ISSN-1189-9662

Member of the Canadian Educational Press Association, Canadian Public Relations Society, International Association of Business Communicators, and the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education

Printed on Recycled Paper

Features

10 **Benefits & Economic Services**
Plan Ahead and Register Early: Pre-Retirement Seminars
by Don Ash

12 **Living Well**
Surviving Suicide: A Healing Journey
by Marie Wall

14 **Professional Development**
Sharing Our Cultures: Collaborating for Multicultural Understanding
by Rene Wicks

16 **Viewpoint**
Here We Go Again
by Denise Pike

18 *Beware the Anti-Media Literacy Lobbyists*
by Chris M. Worsnop

20 *Fellow Travellers*
by Beverley Park

21 **Hats Off!**
Drover Awards: Teachers Recognized for Contributions to Language Arts and Drama

22 **In the Classroom**
ArtsSmarts Project at Baltimore All Grade School: It's Not Just a Hole in the Ground, You Know!
by Annette Mooney

25 **Money Matters**
Families and Financial Planning
by Pat Hogan

Departments

Up Front	2
On Location News	4
In Memoriam	9
Calendar	*back cover*

School Representative Seminars
Coming in Fall 2004

A second series of School Representative Seminars will take place as part of the ongoing triennial program in the fall of 2004. The province has been divided into nine regions and three seminars will be held in the fall. Schools will have the opportunity for representatives to attend every three years. School representatives will receive specific information directly from the NLTA office.

GROUP 4 – AVALON (GROUP B)
October 29-30, 2004 – Holiday Inn, St. John's
Branches Attending: Baccalieu, Bay Roberts, Bell Island, Carbonear, Marconi, Placentia, Upper Trinity South

GROUP 5 – LABRADOR
October 1-2, 2004 – Aurora Hotel, Goose Bay
Branches Attending: Churchill Falls, Coastal Labrador South, Labrador West, Lake Melville, Nutak Labradorimi

GROUP 6 – GANDER
October 1-2, 2004 – Albatross Hotel, Gander
Branches Attending: Fogo Island, Ganova, Hamilton Sound, Notre Dame, St. Brendan's, Trinity-Deadman's Bay

PROVINCIAL/NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

NEWS

BURIN BAY ARM

2004 Christmas Card Contest winner announced

Kelsi Stapleton, a Grade 5 student at Jamieson Academy in Burin Bay Arm, has been chosen as winner of the 2004 NLTA Christmas Card Contest. Kelsi receives a $75 cash award and a framed copy of her winning entry. Her winning design will appear on the NLTA Christmas card that will be sent to schools, businesses and other groups in December 2004. The theme for the 2004 contest was *Christmas in Another Land*.

A second place cash prize of $50 was awarded to Megan Stewart, Grade 3 student at Helen Tulk Elementary in Bishop's Falls, and a third place cash prize of $25 was awarded to Grade 3 student Samantha Hancock of St. Anne's Academy in Dunville.

The Communications/Political Action Committee of the NLTA chooses the theme each year. Entries were judged this year by the Chair of the Communications/Political Action Committee and the NLTA Graphic Designer. Entries are judged on the basis of their relevance to the theme, creativity, colour and ability to reproduce well. A total of 215 entries were received this year.

Kelsi Stapleton's winning design for the 2004 NLTA Christmas card.

RANDOM ISLAND

Students create Random Island website

As part of the their Social Studies curriculum the Grade 4 students at Random Island Academy have designed and created web pages about the communities in which the live. This Grassroots project contains information about nine Random Island communities: Aspey Brook, Elliott's Cove, Hickman's Harbour, Lady Cove, Lower Lance Cove, Petley, Robinson's Bight, Snook's Harbour and Weybridge. Information on each community is broken down into four topics: Community Information, Buildings, Residents, and Natural Resources, with links on each page/topic to the same page of other communities. This allows for easy contrast and comparison amongst communities, which will be valuable to those studying the researched communities, and/or varying factors between communities.

The students began the research and interviewing process late in the fall. They liked very much taking pictures with the digital camera, scanning pictures, interviewing community members, researching the community and creating web pages.

"The students loved working on this project," says Paulette Porter, Grade 4 teacher at Random Island Academy. "They had fun and worked very well together. They are very proud of their website." The students' website may be viewed at www.k12.nf.ca/randomisland/showcase/gr04/communities/index.htm.

GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR

School celebrates first annual Math/π Day

On March 12, 2004, Exploits Valley High Greenwood in Grand Falls-Windsor celebrated its first annual Math/π Day. March 14 is officially Pi Day because the numerical approximation of π is 3.14. Byron Hiscock, Math Department Head explains, "Pi Day is a day to

celebrate mathematics in our school. It gives us time to allow our students to have fun while investigating mathematics concepts. Other schools across Canada and the United States have been celebrating Pi Day for a number of years and we decided it was a wonderful way to highlight mathematics in our school."

To begin the celebrations that morning, students who had a birthday on March 14 were given pies. In the afternoon students were divided into teams according to their grade level. The winning team in each grade won a prize worth $150 in cash and merchandise certificates donated by businesses in the community.

The Grade 9 activity was entitled "Bottle Bob's Bungee Adventure". The task of each team was to conduct an experiment, collect data, construct a graph and derive an equation to make a prediction. They had to determine the length of a bungee cord needed to have Bungee Bob jump from a height of four metres and land as close as possible to the floor without touching. Each group prediction was tested in the gym and the team with the best jump won. Team Gamma, consisting of members Amelia Boone, Nicole Sooley and Erica Barnes, was the winning team for Grade 9.

Students from Exploits Valley High Greenwood work in teams to solve math problems during Math/π Day.

The Grade 10 teams participated in a Murder Mystery Game. When they arrived in school the day before the event, they noticed yellow police tape, blood, and the outline of a body. Pictures were posted of the murder scene. Students had to complete ten sets of math problems in order to obtain clues, which would enable them to identify the killer. They scored points for each set of questions and total times were recorded. In the end, it was a tie and two teams, Aristotle and Nightingale, were proclaimed winners. Team Aristotle consisted of Bryan Ayre, Karen Inder, Tiffany Ballard and Natasha Burton and Team Nightingale consisted of Carla Saunders, Heidi Harbin, Adam Pardy, Laura Lewis and Chris Thompson.

In attendance for the afternoon was Mr. Dennis Ivany, Mathematics Consultant from the Department of Education. Mr. Ivany noted that "It was interesting to see students collaborating to predict the length of bungee cord needed to give poor Bottled Bob the biggest thrill without 'going splat' and to listen as students realized that mathematics works. Students involved in the mystery of Mr. Butler's murder (I hear he willed his entire fortune to Mr. Hiscock for a gourmet dinner at McDonald's) were each contributing to group work, and it was obvious that students were learning from each other. Most importantly, it seemed students were having fun and were engaged in doing mathematics. As for Ms. Simmons, they should throw the book – preferably a good, thick, hardcover math book – at her for committing such a dastardly deed. Remember, $2\pi r$ better than one π, but you get more π when the πr^2."

At the end of the afternoon, students were randomly awarded a number of pies and donated prizes. To conclude Pi Day, a group of students sang a Pi Day song especially arranged and performed by Mr. Mike Carroll, Ryan Dean, Alana Noftall and Andrea Noftall. All agreed that the day was a great success and they are looking forward to next year's Pi Day. We would like to thank all of our sponsors for helping to make this educational endeavor such a success. As well, special thanks to Constable Trina Rideout for arresting the suspected murderer.

For more pictures on Pi Day visit the school's website at www.evh.k12.nf.ca/greenwood.

High school lunchtime activities promote active lifestyles

Students at St. Kevin's High School in the Goulds engage in a variety of physical activities such as basketball and ping pong each lunchtime in the school's gymnasium. The non-structured sessions have evolved into a student-centered program promoting more active lifestyles while allowing students to practice skills in the physical education curriculum.

St. Kevin's Physical Education teacher, Clarence Sutton, is pleased with the daily program and notes a progressive improvement in the students' ability to work and play together. "I believe in an open gym concept and students of all skill levels have responded well to this type of non-structured activity," says Sutton.

"On any given day, many of our students participate in some type of activity in the gym," says school principal, Kevin Coady. "Overall it's a beneficial program for the students."

ST. JOHN'S

Students participate in RealTime Cancer Coins for Cancer Drive

Students and staff of Macdonald Drive Junior High School in St. John's took part in RealTime Cancer's Blue Yellow Day on March 26. This day was designed to provide the opportunity to participate in and contribute to the fight for life against cancer and to communicate a "Positive Attitude" message to the students. Staff and students wore blue and yellow, symbolizing the positive virtues of Hope and Faith. Thank you students of MDJH who donated $155 in coins for the drive.

Ms. Connie Peddle (teacher) and students from Macdonald Drive Jr. High, who volunteered to collect the coins for the RealTime Cancer Coins for Cancer Drive.

"No wonder their work's slipping.
They have their thinking caps on backwards."

Student receives award from Lieutenant Governor

Lieutenant Governor Edward Roberts presented Emma Collingwood, a Grade 6 student at Mary Queen of Peace Elementary School in St. John's, her award for designing this year's Provincial Historica Fairs t-shirt, on March 24 at Government House. Emma received $100 and t-shirts for her family.

The Lieutenant Governor is the Honorary Patron for the Provincial Historica Fairs. Also on hand for the ceremony was Senator Laurier LaPierre, National Chair of the Historica Fairs Program. Emma's design reflected this year's theme "Notre histoire française". The theme was chosen to honor and celebrate 500 years of French presence in our province. Emma's design was chosen from over 1,000 entries. "I like art, and I had fun taking part in the Historica Fair at my school. I liked visiting the projects that others did, too, as I learned a lot from them," says Emma.

Lieutenant Governor Edward Roberts (right) and Senator Laurier LaPierre present Emma Collingwood with her award. Photo by K. Bruce Lane Photography.

Historica Fairs link to the curriculum and take place across Canada in May of each year. Students prepare projects that are based on an aspect of Canadian history and culture and present them to the public through their school fairs that occur from February to April. Some projects are chosen to represent their schools at Regional Fairs held in May. The Newfoundland and Labrador committee sponsors eight Regional Fairs across the province. A total of 15 students are chosen to represent the province at a National Fair held in a different part of Canada each year. This year students will travel to Montreal in July for the week-long event. All expenses are covered by Historica.

Students across Newfoundland and Labrador proudly wear their shirts. They distinguish this province at the National Fair and are coveted by many at the national level. This province is the only one to use students to design the provincial shirt and it has been most successful.

"Our students have great talent and they are able to combine history and art in a way that effectively reflects each year's theme," comments Barbara Bartlett, Provincial Coordinator for Historica Fairs.

The following runners-up in the design contest from each of the other seven regions received $25: Matthew Roberts, John Watkins Academy, Hermitage; Leeanne Goodman, Random Island Academy; Tyson Smith, St. Mary's All-Grade, Mary's Harbour, Labrador; Brandon Brake, Northshore Elementary, Corner Brook; Randy Pittman, Lake Academy, Fortune; Sarah Power, Eric G. Lambert School, Churchill Falls; and Emily Best, Queen of Peace Middle School, Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

Historica has many programs to benefit students and teachers. For further information visit the Historica website at www.histori.ca. The provincial site is www.heritage.k12.nf.ca.

AVALON EAST

Students and staff enjoy a musical time

The students and staff of St. Bernard's School in Witless Bay, St. Patrick's Elementary in Bay Bulls, and St. Peter's Elementary in Mount Pearl were treated to a day of music making with musicians from the St. John's area on March 26. Each school participated in a half-day conference-style event. The students were divided into multi-grade groups and then traveled around their school attending 25-minute sessions with musicians who shared their musical experiences, talents and stories. Visiting musicians included Jean Hewson, Alan Ricketts, Gail Tapper, Arthur O'Brien, Larry Foley, Rick West, Frank Maher, Randy Smith, Judith Morrissey, Joe Tompkins, Billy Diamond and Krista Borden. This event was held in conjunction with a Grassroots project entitled "Generations of Song" which the students from these schools are participating in.

Mr. Michael Edmunds, Principal of St. Patrick's School, would like to extend a very special thank you to Ms. Carolyn Campbell, music teacher at these three schools, for arranging this wonderful musical workshop.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Summer Institutes in Marine Science and Geography Education

Teachers of a wide variety of K-12 courses may be interested in two institutes being offered conjointly this summer (July 19-30) at the Faculty of Education, Memorial

Thinking About Retirement?

Under the Teachers' Pension Act, a teacher is eligible for pension benefit:

(a) At age 60 with between five and twenty-four years of pensionable service.
(b) At age 55 or after with at least twenty-five years of pensionable service.
(c) After completing thirty years of worked service regardless of age (worked service refers to all pensionable service except university study buy-back that could be purchased prior to 1991).
(d) With twenty-nine years of worked service and at least thirty years of pensionable service on a reduced pension based on the number of months of retirement prior to age 55.

Checklist for Retiring Teachers

The following checklist is designed to assist teachers as they participate and plan for this upcoming life phase change:

- Apply to NLTA to attend a Pre-Retirement Seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement.
- Confirm the eligible date of your retirement at the Pre-Retirement Seminar.
- Submit your resignation to School District (DO NOT resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur before Christmas; three months notice (March 31) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas.
- Apply for Teachers' Pension by completing the appropriate *Teachers' Pension Application*.
- Complete the *Direct Deposit Form* and submit to Pensions Division.
- Apply for Severance Pay by completing the *Severance Payment Request Form* from Teacher Payroll.
- Confirm/consult with Johnson Incorporated on Group Insurance coverage, Tel: 1-800-563-1528.
- Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form and submitting it to the Pensions Division.
- Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
- Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

Please note the following changes effective upon retirement:

- NLTA Membership status changes from Active Membership to Life or Associate Membership.
- Access to the services and benefits of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) terminates.
- Basic Life Insurance coverage reduces to twice annual pension from twice annual salary (provided coverage is maintained and premiums paid) and is further reduced at age 65.
- Eligibility for EI ceases (unless a person becomes a "re-established worker" or is on a forced medical retirement).

Any questions or comments can be directed to an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division.

University. Teachers and other interested graduate students can enroll in both or either of these institutes. It is intended that teachers at both elementary and secondary levels of geography, social studies, sciences, and environment courses will expand their knowledge and pedagogy during these institutes.

Activities will be located in several different Avalon communities, reached by sea and bus. Several Marine Institute and other facilities will be used for classes and activities, including the Marine Institute vessel *Mares*.

For course credit, each institute will require readings and preparation prior to class time and assignment development following the classes. Assignments will be due August 9. The week of August 2-6 is set aside by instructors to assist with post-institute activities.

Other Faculty of Education summer semester courses are likely to conflict with the institutes' schedules, as classes will be the full day long. Participants in one institute only will have two days off. One day (July 30) is reserved for inclement weather cancellation. The schedule of activities available on the Education website demonstrates that travel by bus and vessel comprise several days during the institutes. Thus, a fee for travel costs must be included: $200 for each institute or $300 for both institutes.

The courses associated with the institutes are E-6650 Current Issues in Science Education and E-6917 Atlantic Canada: Geography, Climate and Sustainability. Each course has a credit value of three credit hours, for a total of six credit hours for participants registered in both courses. Participants do not have to register for any course.

Students registered in a MUN graduate program will not have to pay additional tuition fees. Students not registered in a MUN graduate program may apply for credit, paying the undergraduate tuition fee. All applicants for credit must meet the requirements for admission to the graduate programs of the Faculty of Education.

Two websites provide additional information and application forms. Please consult Marine Science Teachers Institute at www.mun.ca/educ/marine/ and Geography Education Institute at www.mun.ca/educ/grad/ccge/.

French trip provides opportunities beyond the virtual classroom

Students enrolled in high school French courses have taken their instruction in the language one step further by experiencing an educational trip to Quebec. Twenty-four students from 11 different schools traveled with two CDLI French teachers, Valerie Hoskins and Glenn Cake, to experience first hand the language and culture they are studying on-line.

All participating students are currently taking one of three CDLI French courses including French 2200, 3200 or 3201. They attend school in Port Saunders, Arnold's Cove, Mary's Harbour, St. Lunaire, King's Cove, Terrenceville, Gillams, La Scie, Lethbridge, St. Lawrence and King's Point. The weekend prior to the departure, students arrived in St. John's for some introductory activities. They enjoyed a guided tour of the House of Assembly at the Confederation Building and were also greeted by the Minister of Education, the Honourable John Ottenheimer.

Activities on Saturday and Sunday provided the group with the opportunity to meet each other for the first time face-to-face. As students of CDLI, they had only met online prior to this occasion. "It was quite special to see the interaction that took place between teachers and students as they've been working together since the beginning of this current school year," said Glenn Cake.

Upon arrival in Montreal, the group travelled directly to St-Donat, Quebec, an outdoor activity centre north of the city. The students were engaged in several activities including theme activities, familiarization games, language workshops, exercises in oral expression, outdoor winter activities such as downhill and cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and cultural and musical activities. All instruction and activities were conducted "en français" to foster a true immersion experience.

Students participating in the CDLI educational French trip engage in skiing at St-Donat, Quebec.

Students worked closely with French monitors throughout the entire stay and were encouraged and rewarded for their participation and willingness to express themselves in French. The monitors were very animated and enthusiastic at all times. All comments and reports indicated that the Newfoundland and Labrador contingent were very good students who participated in all activities without reservation.

Some highlights of the trip included a visit to the Biodome, the Olympic Park which offered a magnificent view of Montreal, and a tour of Old Montreal featuring the Basillica of Notre Dame. As a special treat,

the students went to the Bell Centre to watch a Canadians hockey game on their last evening in Montreal. The highlight of the evening was watching two of our very own, Newfoundland and Labrador hockey players Michael Ryder and Darren Langdon.

The return to Newfoundland and Labrador was met with some signs of happiness but also regret. The students conducted themselves as excellent ambassadors of the province. They participated willingly in all activities, put forth good efforts to communicate in the target language and seemed to enjoy all activities and outings.

"In sharing this exciting opportunity with the students, it was our goal that the students would experience a positive immersion experience in French and increase their awareness of French culture," said Glenn Cake. "We believe that this experience has enhanced their desire to continue the study of French language and culture beyond high school. The inaugural CDLI French educational immersion trip was a great success."

Insurance Brokers Association of Newfoundland scholarships

The Insurance Brokers Association of Newfoundland offers two annual Broker Identity Program (BIP) Scholarships valued at $500 each. "Our association promotes education and professional development within our industry. We also encourage students outside our industry to embark on post-secondary studies. A scholarship can help with those many start-up expenses," says Darrell Swain, President of the Insurance Brokers Association of Newfoundland.

To qualify, applicants must be a high school student entering first-year studies at an accredited university or post-secondary college (i.e. MUN, CONA, etc.); and must not be a dependant (as defined by the Federal Income Tax Act) of an employee of an IBAN-member company, or an employee of such a brokerage.

Individuals meeting the criteria must submit a completed application form including high school marks, two reference letters, as well as a 500-word essay.

The scholarship is based on the grade average achieved for the final year of high school, together with information contained in the reference letters and the completed application form, including information on school and community activities and future plans, as well as the quality and originality of the essay. The deadline for applications is August 31, 2004.

Additional information, including application forms, can be obtained by contacting the IBAN Office at: Tel: 709-726-4450; Fax: 709-754-4399; email: iin@nfld.net; or www.iban.ca.

CHARLIE ERNEST LOVELESS, 1950 – 2004

On February 18, 2004, family, friends, colleagues and students were deeply shocked and saddened by the sudden passing of Charlie Loveless.

Charlie was born on August 4, 1950, and received his early education at Seal Cove (Fortune Bay) and Grand Bank. He attended Memorial University and graduated with a B.A. and a B.Ed. He began his teaching career in his hometown of Seal Cove in 1973 and taught there for 22 years. From 1995 to the time of his untimely death he taught at John Watkins Academy in Hermitage.

During his teaching career Charlie was actively involved with the NLTA at the local level serving on the executive of the Seagaulher Branch virtually from its formation to the present. He was actively involved in his community, serving terms on the John Watkins Academy School Council, Conher Development Association, Seal Cove Recreation Committee, and, in his church, serving on the Corps Councils as a Sunday School teacher and Cub leader.

Charlie's commitment to his profession and his students was mirrored daily by his willingness to go beyond what was necessary in terms of his time and effort. If there was a need, Charlie was there. He played an integral role in introducing the CDLI program at John Watkins Academy and persistently labored to ensure its success. His jovial nature and love of socializing made him a pleasure to be around and a friend to all. Over the years he touched hundreds of lives and made them better people through his teaching and selfless demonstrations of living.

Charlie is deeply missed by his loving wife, Joan, sons Wayne and Kevin, mother Ethel, the Loveless and Johnson families, and a large circle of family and friends. *(Submitted by the staff of John Watkins Academy.)*

Charlie Loveless

Plan Ahead and Register Early

Pre-Retirement Seminars

by Don Ash

Teachers within two years of retirement eligibility should register for one of the NLTA's seven Pre-Retirement Seminars being held in the fall of 2004 in Stephenville, Corner Brook, Gander, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. These seminars are held in accordance with Association policy as part of its overall program of pre-retirement counselling. Clause 18.11 of the Provincial Collective Agreement and Clause 29.12 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement provide two days paid leave to attend these seminars.

Information sessions will deal with topics such as the Teachers' Pension Plan, Severance Pay, Employment Insurance, NLTA Group Insurance, Psychological Preparation for Retirement, Financial and Estate Planning and the Canada Pension Plan. As well, time is available for individual counselling of prospective retirees by the various consultants.

The full text of the NLTA Policy on Pre-Retirement Seminars can be found on the NLTA website (www.nlta.nl.ca) and will be mailed to teachers with confirmation of registration.

Things You Should Know About Attending

- Potential participants must register for a particular seminar and apply to their District for leave.
- Only those teachers eligible to retire during or before June 2007 will be eligible to attend.
- Registration must be received at the NLTA Office at least four weeks in advance to ensure approval of attendance.
- The Association reserves the right to refuse acceptance of registration forms at any particular seminar if the registration has not been received at the NLTA office in accordance with Association policy.
- It is the responsibility of the individual participant to make arrangements for hotel accommodations, should any be required. Please reference that you are attending an NLTA function and this should provide a reduced rate which is available to persons travelling on Association related business.
- Travel expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with the following provisions:

i) participants shall be reimbursed the lesser of travel by private vehicle or public transportation to the seminar closest to the place of residence. In the event that a teacher requests and is accepted to attend a seminar other than the closest seminar, the participant shall only be reimbursed the amount applicable for travel to the closest seminar.

ii) payment for travel in a private vehicle shall be at the rate of 6.4¢ per kilometre for the return trip from residence to seminar site.

iii) travel via public transportation will be reimbursed at the rate of 80 percent of ferry, taxi, or economy airfare; in the case of airfare, the lesser of excursion (seat sale) or 80 percent of economy airfare will be paid, where excursion (seat sale) fares can be arranged. Receipts shall be required for all reimbursement.

iv) no expenses will be paid to participants living or teaching in the community where the seminar is held.

v) a spouse is welcome to accompany the participating teacher to the pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be covered.

- All other expenses, such as meals, accommodation and child care, are the responsibility of the participating teacher.
- Expenses will be provided for one pre-retirement seminar only and a teacher participant shall be permitted to attend one seminar only. (Notwithstanding this, a teacher may attend a second seminar as a spouse.)
- Teachers must attend the seminar location closest to their place of residence, except in cases where the mode, cost or availability of transportation necessitates otherwise.
- Directors and Assistant Directors, and spouses, are welcome to attend one pre-retirement seminar, but no expenses will be paid in accordance with this policy.

Given the increasing numbers of teachers eligible to retire, we reserve the right to limit the number of people who will be granted access, depending on the physical facilities available at each site. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers plan ahead and register early in the event that registrations have to be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.

Don Ash is an Administrative Officer in the Benefits and Economic Services Division of the NLTA.

2004
Pre-Retirement Seminar

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Home Address

Postal Code

Home Telephone

Social Insurance Number

School Name

School Telephone

Please check which session you will be attending:

- ☐ **Oct. 7-8** – Hotel Gander, Gander
- ☐ **Oct. 14-15** – Holiday Inn, Stephenville
- ☐ **Oct. 21-22** – Holiday Inn, Corner Brook
- ☐ **Oct. 28-29** – Mt. Peyton, Grand Falls-Windsor
- ☐ **Nov. 4-5** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Nov. 22-23** – Holiday Inn, St. John's
- ☐ **Dec. 2-3** – Holiday Inn, St. John's

Will your spouse be attending? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name of spouse (if attending)

Earliest eligibility date for pension

Have you attended a previous pre-retirement seminar?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Note:

- Teachers within two years of retirement (on or before June 2007) are eligible to attend.
- All participants must pre-register.
- You will receive confirmation prior to seminar.
- Travel costs will be paid according to policy and only to the nearest seminar.
- Teachers are advised to bring a calculator.

Please submit registration form to:

Melanie Jaster
Benefits and Economic Services Division,
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
3 Kenmount Road, St. John's, NL A1B 1W1
Fax: 709-726-4302; 1-877-711-6582 (*toll free*)

FOR NLTA OFFICE USE ONLY		
Date Received	Confirmation Sent	Information Package Sent

Surviving Suicide: A Healing Journey

by MARIE WALL

The road to healing after the loss of a boyfriend through suicide was unimaginable. It was 20 years ago this month and the experience has been a life-altering event. The pain was excruciating and the healing took years. The levels of loss were inconceivable. Now after numerous years and knowing that the grief has healed, I would like to share the story with you, in the hope that it helps you. It may assist in understanding your own experience or that of a student, colleague or friend. Maybe it will give you ideas as you continue on your journey without dishonouring the life of someone important to you. For people who have not experienced this type of loss, this article will help you to better understand loss after suicide.

"The very act of suicide is often felt as personal rejection, combined with helplessness. The struggle to make sense is often a long and arduous journey. I believe that non-judgement is the only respectful response."

I would wish that this experience would never be felt by anyone again, yet I know differently. For those who are left behind, surviving the suicide of a friend or loved one is a journey that will change them forever. While the description of my journey may appear to be chronological, the healing journey is more layered than linear, more like a tapestry that interweaves many events, times and experiences that transported me to the health and happiness I experience today.

I was 21 years of age and by my family's standards, I was very reflective and driven to figure out what life was meant to be about (the ambitions of a young adult). Yet nothing prepared me for coping with a death and the challenges that faced me in the coming years. Bill and I had been dating for about 18 months and while I knew something was wrong, my naivety, inexperience, and lack of skills resulted in my not acting on the concern I had over his behaviours. I did not know he was suicidal, nor did the campus chaplain, but I knew he was unhappy and that he was "down" much of the time.

Suicide has an unfortunate stigma attached. With our deeper understanding of mental health this stigma is changing, but survivors may still feel remnants of shame. Initially I felt this, but with understanding from others these feelings subsided. Suicide is more than the death of someone we know. A person who commits suicide has some form of mental illness. We do not judge a person who dies of cancer, or their family, and the same respect is needed in the case of mental illness and suicide. The need for the pain to end is the driving factor. The distress they experience is part of the pain we feel. The very act of suicide is often felt as personal rejection, combined with helplessness. The struggle to make sense is often a long and arduous journey. I believe that non-judgement is the only respectful response.

When Bill passed away I experienced both loss and hope. This was very confusing. The loss was understandable due to the pain of losing someone so suddenly. The sympathy of others was necessary for me to cope daily with life's tasks. The feeling of hope struck me as very peculiar as it certainly did not seem to be what would be expected. I remember the hope for me was in believing "he died, I need to live. What do I have to do to become fully alive?" This became the cornerstone to grieving his death and learning to live anew.

Dealing with the loss of this person in my life was paramount. I carried it with me every day. I continued to work and socialize but that first year presented challenges like no other. There was also a new level of awareness I have not experienced since. It was an acute gut instinct. I knew things that I had to do and no matter what others said, I had the fortitude to do them. At the time I could not imagine getting over the pain, but those close to me kept reassuring me that it would get better. They were right.

There were several things that helped it get better. I learned that time heals when you do something with it. Waiting for time to pass and letting things fester was not helpful. I talked and cried. I had one friend who I would check in with every day for months. This person just listened, whether I was feeling good or distraught – this was a key connection that reassured me that I was not alone. Ritual was also important. Regularly, I would mark the anniversaries and when the time was right I completed a ceremony to help honour our relationship and my need to let go of the grief. I realized that I had to remember a person who had shared my life and to do this I completed a cross-stitch in his memory. It was framed and hung in an important place. A funny thing happened during one ceremony. I noticed there were several stitches that were not complete, and the symbolism struck me. I was not finished my grief either.

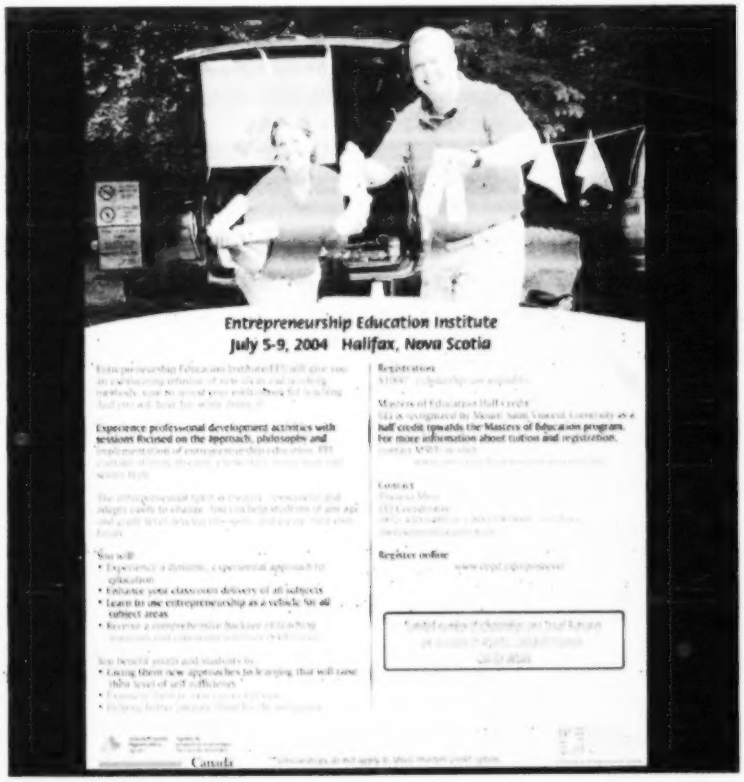
Counselling was very helpful. I needed a safe place to process everything that was happening and to deepen my understanding of the relationship and the events. It was not just talking about the situation; the healing exercises were essential to continuing the journey. There were times when I made things happen and there were times when things happened for me. I just had to trust myself and others. The spiritual dimension of this grieving process was phenomenal. The prayers of my own and others brought a sense of not feeling alone and abandoned. It allowed a connection from which the meaning of life could be felt, even when it was not always understood. I also had several dreams throughout this time. Some were reassuring, while others were challenging. I have not dreamt of Bill in more than five years, but I now know they were a true gift. Although it is difficult for friends and family to always be around, their support and non-judgmental understanding is a key to working through the monumental grief. It was with their care that I was able to understand and grow from what had occurred.

This experience has helped me in working with people who feel suicidal. I have completed training in suicide intervention and have used these skills to help others. I have had to accept that I did not have the ability to help Bill at that time, nor could anyone else. The feelings of powerlessness have been very humbling.

I do not know all the reasons my friend found the pain of living such that he took his own life, but I am grateful for the time we did have and for all that I have learned through this experience. I would not be the person I am today without the love we shared or the pain I have lived through. Surviving suicide is the most painful thing I have ever experienced, but I have survived. I am stronger now than I ever could have been. I have empathy for those who are experiencing or affected by mental health issues. This journey has given me a greater appreciation of the sacredness of life. We should always remember that we do not know how much time we have and to live each day as best we can.

If you are coping with the suicide of a loved one, friend, colleague or student, you are not alone. Many people have had similar experiences. It is painful, yet in the midst of that pain there is hope. It will take time to grieve the loss and find new ways of living. Remember, depression is more than simple unhappiness; it is the feeling of being in despair, an empty hole. If someone you know is suffering from depression, help is available. If you notice someone has been isolating themselves or their mood is bleak, inquire about how he/she is. The pain of depression can be healed and working with a professional is a step in that direction. Encourage them to call a professional, and your Employee Assistance Coordinators are available to provide help and support. Your intervention could save a life.

Marie Wall is an EAP Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for teachers. For confidential assistance contact Marie Wall (ext. 265) or Kathy Taylor-Rogers (ext. 242).



Sharing Our Cultures

Collaborating for Multicultural Understanding

by RENE WICKS

Over the past four years I have had the privilege of working with Lloydetta Quaicoe, originally from Sierra Leone, in a series of projects that not only aim to foster greater cultural understanding, but give new Canadians who are students in our schools an opportunity to shine! Through a multicultural fair these young people are able to showcase their countries and cultures to thousands of students in Newfoundland and Labrador schools. And this year, through web-based technology and NLTA's Virtual Teacher Centre, the experience is available on line to students everywhere.

As project coordinator, Lloydetta brought a number of partners to the planning of this initiative. In addition to NLTA, the federal Department of Canadian Heritage, the Department of Education, the Avalon East School District, and the CBC were all contributing partners. The result has been the creation, not only of an exciting field trip experience, but a valuable learning resource which helps teachers make important curriculum connections.

The Multicultural Fair

On Sunday afternoon, March 21, the entire convention area at the St. John's Delta Hotel was a scene of activity, excitement, and colour. Hundreds of invited guests and

interested persons had arrived for the launch of the Fourth Annual Multicultural Fair, which features display booths created by young students who have come to live in Newfoundland and Labrador from approximately 25 countries around the world. Often dressed in the traditional clothing of their individual cultures, these students exhibited interesting objects from their homelands, as well as photographs, maps, and printed information – creating a colourful multimedia profile. Complementing the student exhibits were approximately 12 booths representing the Government of Canada and a variety of community agencies.

The launch, however, was only the beginning. During the next two days approximately 2,200 students from 22 schools visited the exhibitions. Students and their teachers came from all over the Avalon Peninsula, and as far away as Grand Bank and Clarenville. At the beginning of each session, visitors were entertained with performances featuring the singing, dancing, and acting talents of our new Canadians. As well, a fashion show gave an opportunity to marvel at the creative designs and brilliant colours featured in diverse traditional clothing throughout the world.

The Educational Program

Sharing Our Cultures connects with the curriculum and adds value to what students are learning in the classroom. Prior to attending the event students were provided with a range of activities to help them reflect on what it means to be a refugee and immigrant, and to analyse Canada's criteria for accepting new citizens. While visiting the fair each student was given a passport. As they visited each booth they made notes and answered questions about the country or organization, then had their passport stamped. Upon returning to school another series of suggested activities were provided, to help maximize follow-up and provide opportunities for long-term curriculum connections.

The Web Site

This year NLTA is providing an opportunity for students throughout the province to explore these countries and to complete and receive their own stamped passports on line. If your students are learning about other countries, cultures, and religions you may wish to have them visit www.virtualteachercentre.ca and click on the Sharing Our Cultures link.

Rene Wicks is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Reality check!
Evaluating Online Information

MEDIA AWARENESS NETWORK
RÉSEAU EDUCATION MÉDIAS

Help students analyse what they find on the

Reality Check! offers:

- Strategies for authenticating information and optimizing searches
- Teachers' guide with handouts and exercises
- Independent Study Unit with interactive assignments
- Slide presentation for in-class discussion on copyright, **plagiarism, bias and more**

To preview or order **Reality Check!** call 1-800-896-3342 or visit **www.realitycheckforstudents.ca**

Canada

This project was made possible by a financial contribution from Industry Canada's SchoolNet Program

Here We Go Again

by DENISE PIKE

Spring has finally arrived bringing with it many changes, a vast number of them resulting from the first provincial budget brought down on March 30 by Danny Williams' government.

As far as the education system is concerned, neither the immediate or long-range future looks too promising. As of September, 256 teaching units will be removed from the system and school boards will be reduced from 11 to 5, one of which is a Francophone board. Both these decisions will have serious implications for our students and teachers and will impact the delivery of educational services to our schools. This is a far cry from the promises made by the Tories on developing a world-class education system during their fiery election campaign.

"Without adequate teacher supports, the most well-developed, best researched, sophisticated, curriculum-based programs cannot achieve their potential and may be destined to failure."

With three children, one of whom has now moved into post-secondary, over the past few years my involvement in education has been within the K-12 system. And amidst all the debates, various committees, research and experiences, I have arrived at one inescapable conclusion: it's the human supports, i.e. the teacher interacting with the student, which is the key ingredient to academic achievement. Without adequate teacher supports, the most well-developed, best researched, sophisticated, curriculum-based programs cannot achieve their potential and may be destined to failure.

Because of our billion dollar provincial deficit (inflated or not), we are told the province cannot afford to allow the current number of teachers to remain in the system. The 256 units removed this year, along with the projected 220 units for next, is needed to help offset our debt. In an attempt to justify the cuts, we're told the money saved is being reinvested and our province has one of the lowest pupil-teacher ratios in the country. While the government might consider this a small price to pay in order to balance the budget, to the thousands of students jammed in overcrowded classrooms with less in the way of programs than ever before, the cost is much too great.

Could this be the new approach we have all been waiting for? Nope, seems more like the same old song and dance to me. Nevertheless, Premier Williams says we are finally headed down the right road and the future looks bright and prosperous. However, as I ponder over the recent budget announcements and the adjustments we will face over the year, a feeling of *déjà vu* encompasses me. I am reminded of another turbulent era in education, the time of education reform. I had hoped we had weathered this storm out – perhaps not! It wasn't all that long ago (1996-97) that the House of Assembly was debating and passing another act which changed our educational system in very dramatic ways and served as a blueprint for the system we currently have today.

For some years many people, all with the interests of our children at heart, laboured long and hard to bring about much-needed change to our public education system. But as always, change does have a price. To give way for reconfiguration we went from 27 to 11 school boards and from approximately 500 to 300 schools.

These gut-wrenching decisions resulted in, to put it mildly, many heated debates and differences of opinion among all participants. Every community experienced the division and pain that was so much a part of the whole process. But it opened up the debate and dialogue and got the public involved in education. Despite the wrangling, the people of this province remained committed to education reform and never doubted the benefits it would bring. Unfortunately, the restructuring phase of reform pushed other concerns to the back burners and a great deal of emphasis was placed on reconfiguration as opposed to curriculum.

Over the past few years, however, the focus has once more shifted back to the students and progress has been made in professional development, curriculum and school improvement, literacy, student achievement and accountability. We have also emerged from a time where less than 50 percent of our students completed

school to a point where we have very strong regional and international achievement for all students.

But it's only since the focus has moved back into the classroom and to working to create effective learning environments for our students that we have made great strides in education. As a result of this our children are yielding strong performance gains in a vibrant culture of learning and are holding their own both against their peers nationally and internationally.

The final blocks of education reform are in place here in Newfoundland and Labrador and the time has come to push forward towards a higher quality of education. But we must have the supports and resources to carry it out. We have moved through the pains of education reform; however, I fear this government is intent on taking us back there once again.

The learning process is continual, it is dynamic and it moves on. If we do not move with it we lose out. We have made our sacrifices, we have worked through the changes and we have endured the cuts.

From day one we never turned our back on education reform and we fully intend to remain committed to the cause until we have an education system that will enable our students to receive the best education possible. We will not let them down. We will not break faith with them.

As parents we want our children to have security in life and we believe they can achieve for this province what generations before them could not. We still have hope that the day will come when our youth will be able to stay in this province and enjoy a standard of living comparable to anywhere in the country – but it all hinges on attaining a quality education.

This province will be successful only if all of us, including the government, are successful in helping to prepare our children to take their place in the global community. The key to rebounding and growing the economy of our province lies with improving the future for our children and ensuring they are both healthy and educated. But if we continue to focus solely on balancing a budget while removing the supports from our schools, slashing the healthcare system and ignoring the basic needs of our people, we will always be in want and we stand to lose our most valued resource.

Sadly we will always be limited while the rest of Canada will continue to prosper assisted by some of the most hardworking people with the best brains – our children.

Denise Pike is President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of School Councils.

Beware the Anti-Media Literacy Lobbyists

by CHRIS M. WORSNOP

Neil Seeman of the Fraser Institute has issued a brief article entitled "Beware the Media Literacy Police" which claims to have discovered a conspiracy in education circles aimed at teaching students that the right-wing way of interpreting the world is not the only way. Seeman sinks to the level of slinging mud at media literacy by describing it as an initiative to "wage war against capitalism".

Nobody should be surprised that, coming from the Fraser Institute, this screed bases its central argument upon the assumption that right-wing ways of viewing the world are natural and sensible. By extension it assumes any other ways of viewing the world to be unnatural and not sensible. By further extension it proposes that these so-called unnatural and senseless ways of viewing the world ought not to be allowed in society, let alone within the educational system. Seeman seems confident in his assumption that governments should protect capitalism from scrutiny, and certainly from criticism.

"Media education teachers focus on respecting students' choices and decisions regardless of their orientation, provided those choices and decisions are well formed and properly supported."

He seems to be reviving the Cold War practice of looking for communists under every bed. Both Seeman and the Institute of which he is a fellow display naive oblivion to the fact that their own publications are very highly politically-charged. They issue shrill complaints that others explore political philosophies that might be at variance with their own, and accuse them of preaching politics, while blissfully delivering their own political sermons as an antidote. They seem puzzled that governments do not take the Fraser Institute's view of the world as government policy.

The huge logical leap performed by the Fraser Institute in its argument against media literacy lies in the assumption that those parts of the school curriculum that include analytical and critical theory originating among left-wing scholars actually have the intention of recruiting students into left-wing thought. [Let us ignore the fact that the purpose of the Fraser Institute is to recruit people into right-wing thought, or that other parts of the school curriculum, such as business studies, may well have the same agenda as the Fraser Institute.]

Anybody who has spent any time observing media education classes – and it is painfully clear that Neil Seeman has rarely if ever set foot in a media classroom – will note that students are encouraged to exercise a broad range of critical and analytical skills, not just one set. In short, unlike the Fraser Institute, media teachers do not believe in teaching polemics. Media students are taught how to discover the ideological and political messages that reside within all media messages. Media teachers believe that students should become adept at identifying political and ideological bias of all stripes wherever they encounter it, whether in the writings of the Fraser Institute or of Noam Chomsky. The Fraser Institute, it seems, would prefer that students not be allowed to study Noam Chomsky at all, except as an exercise in finding Chomsky's political and ideological errors.

Good media education courses do not focus on propagandizing students into a single way of thinking. They provide students with a broad range of critical and analytical skills to help them make their own choices and decisions about the ideological and political messages surrounding them in 21st-century culture, whether it be *Survivor* or *Masterpiece Theatre*. Media education teachers focus on respecting students' choices and decisions regardless of their orientation, provided those choices and decisions are well formed and properly supported.

Neil Seeman accuses media educators of "anticorporate muckraking", a charge that may contain a note of irony in these days of apparent corporate and governmental corruption. One needs only to mention a few names (Parmalat, Enron, Hollinger, the Federal Liberal Government "sponsorship" scandal) to illustrate this

point. It would be interesting to debate with Seeman if he believes that the Federal Liberal Government should be open for scrutiny and criticism, but not the corporations.

With simplistic logic, Seeman argues that media literacy displaces instruction in the curriculum for reading and writing. Long live the good old "either or" argument! Seeman wants his readers to believe that 21st-century culture contains only one important kind of literacy – print literacy. Media teachers do not deny for a moment that print literacy is important, and they give every support to the teaching of print literacy. They also point out, though, that 21st-century culture is not as strongly rooted in print as was the culture of earlier centuries. Nineteenth and Twentieth Century developments of radio, film, recording, mass production and advertising, television, computers, the Internet have all impacted upon the culture of our time to the point where a huge proportion of the information we are exposed to is screen-based not paper-based; image-based not word-based.

The reason that reading and writing were so strongly embedded in the school curriculum in the 19th-century was that the culture at that time was almost exclusively founded in print. In a time when the base of our culture has expanded so greatly, we can not claim to be studying our culture unless we provide a prominent place in the school curriculum – beside print, not instead of it – for the kinds of literacy needed to understand the new media. The old rationale was that everyone should learn to be the master of language, or else they would be doomed to be its servants. The modern rationale merely adds the new media into the slogan beside language – not in place of language.

So what is this conspiracy that media literacy threatens? Is it a conspiracy to use up time in the school program so that students will not be able to learn reading and writing? Is it a conspiracy to train a generation of students into left-wing philosophies that will drive them to the barricades to fight against corporate capitalism? Or is it perhaps a campaign to equip young people of the 21st-century with the skills, knowledge and insights they need to be able to live in and understand the broad-based culture of their own society without becoming the servants of that culture?

In the spirit of good media education learning, individuals should examine both the arguments put forward by the Fraser Institute and the ones voiced here and come to their own, best-informed conclusions.

Chris Worsnop is a well-known media educator, consultant and author and a member of the Association for Media Literacy (AML) executive.

A relationship you can trust.

At Johnson Inc., our service staff are trained to offer "best friend" advice on all of your home and auto insurance inquiries.

For your free, home and/or auto insurance quote, call or visit us online today.

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Johnson Insurance

1.800.563.0677 *or*
www.johnson.ca/nlta

Fellow Travellers

by BEVERLEY PARK

"For the safety and comfort of fellow travellers, passengers are requested to please close the door behind you." This notice was posted on the train so that as people moved from car to car, they would keep the doors closed. While some passengers did as asked, more often than not the doors were left open and railway employees had to constantly patrol to ensure safety on the train. At a meeting to deal with operations, personnel discussed both the danger of the open doors and the work time required to do what seemingly could, and reasonably should, be done by responsible passengers. After much thought, expressions of frustration and some debate, a simple solution was proposed – to change the sign to read: "For your own personal comfort and safety, please close the door behind you." The result was amazing! While the door was still occasionally left open, most of the time it was closed, as it should be!

Although not by train, my particular role at the NLTA requires me to travel quite frequently, and perhaps that is why this story struck a chord with me. But don't be mistaken… the story is not so much about travel as it is about the travellers… about people and what motivates them to do what they do – or do not do! The train could be anything. It could be your work, your family, or even the NLTA. The doors are the things that need to be done, the seemingly simple yet very important things that ensure security and create comfort. Every one of us is a passenger.

As we travel, some of us – with or without prompting – will do whatever it takes to keep things moving without negative incident. Those are the people who instinctively know what needs to be done and they do it. Others may not sense the needs, but once made aware – for example, by a request – are motivated by responsibility to act for the common good. Others will only act if they see a personal benefit – hence the effectiveness of the second sign! Hard though it is to understand, there are yet another group: those who, even if they stand to gain, would not be bothered to close the door. They rely on others to do it for them and are even willing to risk a loss should no one do what they could have (should have?) done.

In our daily work as teachers, in our roles as partners and parents, and as members of the NLTA, we are often called upon to close the door behind us. Unlike on the train, sometimes there are no signs to remind us. Perhaps the sign is the mission statement posted in the school corridor. How we respond, whether we are motivated to act or whether we consciously or unconsciously neglect to act has an enormous potential to impact upon our work, our family, our community, our Association… our life!

When each and every traveller acts individually to do what needs to be done, this guarantees security not only for him/herself, but also for all his or her fellow travellers. For every one who does not, not only is his or her own security compromised, but so is that of all who travel with them. Even if someone is employed and charged with the task of closing doors for you, he or she cannot be at every portal at all times.

Stop and think for a moment… what kind of traveller are you? Look behind you. Is the door open?

Beverley Park is an Administrative Officer in the Professional Development Division of the NLTA.

Drover Awards

Teachers Recognized for Contributions to Language Arts and Drama

On March 11, 2004, during a special ceremony held at Macdonald Drive Junior High School in St. John's, the Drover Award was presented to Mr. Gordon Ralph, a retired Theatre Arts teacher at Holy Heart of Mary Regional High in St. John's, and to Ms. Donna Mills, Language Arts and Drama teacher at Macdonald Drive Junior High.

Nigel Drover presents Gordon Ralph with the Drover Award for Distinguished Teaching.

The Drover Award was established by the Reading, English and Drama Special Interest Council (REaD) of the NLTA to recognize contributions in the areas of Language Arts and drama. Nominees must have demonstrated outstanding achievement in the teaching and learning of English Language Arts in Newfoundland and Labrador. A maximum of one award may be presented annually for exemplary teaching and a maximum of ten awards may be presented annually for distinguished teaching.

Mr. Ralph's former colleague, Ms. Margot Connors, highlighted the diversified talents of Mr. Ralph. Mr. Nigel Drover then presented Mr. Ralph with the Drover Award for Distinguished Teaching. Mr. Bruce Brenton, a friend of Ms. Mills, spoke of her many accomplishments prior to her teaching career. Mr. Keith Coombs, Principal, applauded Ms. Mills for her enthusiastic efforts at Macdonald Drive Junior High. Mr. Drover then presented Ms. Mills with the Drover Award for Exemplary Teaching. Both recipients expressed gratitude for their award.

On hand for the Drover Award presentations were: Mr. Brian Vardy, President of the NLTA REaD Special Interest Council; Mr. Fred Wood, NLTA Provincial Executive (representing President Fred Douglas); Mr. René Wicks, NLTA; and Ms. Krista Vokey, Avalon East School District. Also attending were: Ms. Smita Joshi, Department of Education; Mr. Nigel Drover, Presenter of the awards; Ms. Linda Crocker, President of Marconi Branch, NLTA; and a group of family members, friends and mentors.

Nigel Drover presents Donna Mills with the Drover Award for Exemplary Teaching.

A social followed and all present congratulated both recipients of the Drover Award in English Language Arts. Congratulations once again Ms. Donna Mills and Mr. Gordon Ralph!

ArtsSmarts Project at Baltimore All Grade School

It's Not Just a Hole in the Ground, You Know!

by ANNETTE MOONEY

"Watching these seven-year-olds dressed in their art smocks with brushes and palettes in hand awaiting the arrival of Ms. Best, gave one a brief glimpse of what it would be like to have a full-time art teacher at the school."

"Imagine the little Grade Twos painted those landscapes!" "Did you see the wicked sgrafitto bowls?" "Did they really wear those colours back in the 17th century?" These were just a few of the comments overheard at Baltimore All Grade School in Ferryland on January 18 when the general public was invited to view the primary/elementary Art Exhibition. Drawings, paintings, dyed shirts, pottery of all shapes and sizes, and a giant landscape mural greeted the visitors as they mulled about the school gymnasium marvelling on the creative talents of the students.

This exhibit was the result of an ArtsSmarts program carried out during the fall semester. Visiting artists, teachers, parents and volunteers all contributed their time and talents to provide the students with an experience that will be remembered for a long time to come.

The ArtsSmarts program, created and funded by the J.W. McConnell Foundation, is administered by the Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council. It is made available to all schools that wish to submit an application for approval. It strives to give children an appreciation of the importance of culture and the arts, and cites as its mandate the providing of more quality art experiences for the youth of our province. Even though the program has existed for a number of years, this is the first time that Baltimore School has submitted an application.

Taking advantage of such a program is crucial to rural schools like Baltimore which does not have an art teacher, and whose students often only experience art if the classroom teacher happens to be artistically inclined. This is a shame as all children tend to love art, and many of their artistic attributes lay dormant for years because the school budget does not allow for the hiring of a full-time, fully qualified art teacher.

Baltimore's proposal, entitled "It's Not Just a Hole in the Ground, You Know!", was a fairly easy one to develop, as Ferryland is home to the Colony of Avalon, an internationally renowned archaeological dig. This community resource has loomed large as a catapult for launching many and various school projects over the past 10 years. In developing the proposal, myself and Michele Maloney (teacher/librarian), as co-ordinators, saw this ArtsSmarts project not just as a vehicle for bringing more visual art experiences to the students of Baltimore, but as a history lesson and a community awareness venture all rolled into one. The local dig is a smorgasbord of ideas and according to Michele, the main difficulty lay in narrowing down the focus of the project. "We had so many directions to go in, and we found that we had a tendency to try and include too many concepts. We decided to zero in on strictly the visual arts and leave the rest for future proposals," Michele explained.

Baltimore's ArtsSmarts project aimed at giving the children an awareness of the possibilities that exist as a result of having this wonderful archaeological resource in their community. Working from the premise that the excavation of artifacts is merely a catalyst for future activities, the students would be made aware of the possible career opportunities connected to the dig, and hopefully see themselves in the future of this development. To summarize the proposal: the K to 6 students at Baltimore would be provided with experiences in the visual arts, as they worked with pottery, textiles and

paint while building on their overall awareness of the Colony of Avalon dig.

As soon as the proposal was approved in September, Michele Maloney and I met with the Colony of Avalon staff to discuss the different areas of study selected by each grade level. The Colony had been in on the planning at the ground floor level and was eager to see the project up and running. Ms. Ann St. Croix, staff co-ordinator, worked with her interpreters and tour guides to tailor theme-focused guided tours for each grade. The Colony was delighted to be involved with the project and conducted all tours free of charge. It may be well to note that even though 80 percent of an ArtsSmarts program is funded by the O'Connell Foundation, the school is expected to raise the remaining 20 percent. In addition to the free tours offered by the Colony of Avalon, contributions also came from the Southern Shore Folk Arts Council, the Ladies Rec and Fitness League, and the Recycling Program at Baltimore School. Local school bus contractor, Mr. Aaron Carey, provided free transportation for the student trips to and from the dig site.

Shaquille Brophy and Lee Croft examining 17th century bowls. Looking on interpreter Colleen O'Keefe and artist Marion Ryan. Photo by Adam Kavanagh.

Strong initial planning, the enthusiasm of the students, and the co-operation of the classroom teachers are all vital factors in the guaranteed success of such a project. However, the input of the visiting artists is crucial, and what a fantastic group of artists were involved with the students! Each one met with the co-ordinators and classroom teacher, conducted a preliminary visit to the class outlining his/her plans to the students, and travelled to the Colony of Avalon for the guided tour.

Isabella St. John, operator of Blue Moon Pottery at the Outer Battery, worked with the Kindergarten and Grade 1 classes to help them create expressions in clay. It was a joy to watch their excited faces as they molded and painted their pinch pots under the expert guidance of Ms. St. John. Prior to this, teachers Delores Hynes and Maria Chidley centered a number of their instruction periods around learning why pottery was so important to the needs of the early 17th century settlers. In learning to identify sculpture and pottery as art forms, the young children were able to appreciate the experiences of a previous culture which lived on the very spot where they now make their homes.

Margaret Best, born and raised in Kingman's on the Southern Shore, a respected visual artist in her own right, guided our Grade 2 students as they investigated the rugged and historical lands of the Ferryland area. In preparation for their project, teacher Margie Clowe had her students take photographs of the area which were later used in their artwork. This was particularly relevant as community is the major theme of their social studies program. Ms. Best was able to offer the children extensive lessons on mixing colours, use of lines, tone, shape, texture and perspective. The culmination of all of this instruction resulted in the students creating individual landscapes which were proudly displayed after completion. Watching these seven-year-olds dressed in their art smocks with brushes and palettes in hand awaiting the arrival of Ms. Best, gave one a brief glimpse of what it would be like to have a full-time art teacher at the school. "We're having ArtsSmarts today," was a familiar declaration heard each day throughout the building.

The Grade 3 class was most fortunate to have as its instructor, visual artist Julia Pickard. Ms. Pickard's work is very well known and has been exhibited in over 75 group exhibitions. Her lively images and love of colour are evident in all her creations. Working with teacher Julia Chafe and her most energetic and enthusiastic 30 or more students, Ms. Pickard led the class through lessons in colour mixing, shading, tinting, charcoal drawings, and landscape and portrait creations. The class had spent considerable time studying their physical surroundings and discussing the many challenges faced by the early settlers. Towards the end of the sessions, the students began work on a giant mural (two panels 8 ft. x 4 ft.) depicting early colony life. This very colourful and wide-open to interpretation mural will grace the walls of Baltimore for many years to come.

(continued on page 24)

Interpreter Jennifer Hawkins with student Devinn Dinn dying wool. Photo by Adam Kavanagh.

The area of study chosen by the Grade 4 class centered around the clothing work by the early settlers at the Colony of Avalon. With teacher Myra Brophy, the class investigated the types of fabric available to the early settlers and the difficulties faced with providing clothes for a 17th century family. The students were particularly interested in learning how dyes were made, and were fortunate to have the expertise of Susan Furneaux to guide them in their research. Ms. Furneaux, a print and dye technician with the Anna Templeton Centre, who has received awards for textile studies, taught the students about the plants and seeds that are commonly used as dye plants in Europe. While visiting the dig site, the class was able to investigate the dye garden and examine numerous plants, learning how they were used by the early settlers. Later the students collected their own plants, learned how to make dye and dyed a number of articles including t-shirts that were hand painted with onion, cochineal and iron, and hemp pockets hand dyed with indigo. Their self-portraits completed on 100% silk were also most impressive.

Teacher Mary Chidley and her Grade 5 students would be completely immersed in this type of project, as a better part of each school week is spent studying the past and present culture of Newfoundland and Labrador. Marion Ryan, a local potter from Fermeuse, worked with the Grade 5 students leading them through the complete process of making a piece of pottery. Marion introduced the class to the various styles of pottery which represented the many cultural backgrounds of the early settlers. What a wonderful time the students had changing those balls of clay into the various creations of their imaginations! Terms like slab, pinch, slip, and glaze trailing rolled off their tongues as they worked their magic to produce original bowls, jugs, cups, etc. Marion is a real inspiration to the students as she currently makes her living indirectly from the Colony of Avalon producing her own line of dishes, pins and sculptures, as well as her popular replicas of the famous Tyg mug.

The Grade 6 students were also in very capable hands, those of local artisan Dane McCarthy of Renews. Dane is a well-known potter who has numerous pieces of his work displayed at the Colony of Avalon. He has recently been commissioned by the Fortress of Louisbourg to produce an original piece for that historic site. Teachers Sandra Lushman and Sonya Grandy chose a historical perspective to ready their classes for the project. They concentrated on the challenges faced by the early settlers who had to eke out a living in this often hostile environment. Under the skillful eye of the master potter, the students then tackled the challenging task of creating 17th century Sgrafitto bowls. The results were both beautiful and impressive – some plain, others with intricate designs. Dane also brought his potter's wheel and everyone got a chance to try and produce a piece on the wheel. The students watched transfixed while Dane, with seeming ease, turned out piece after piece. All and all, it was a great experience for the students.

Besides having a very talented group of artists working with our ArtsSmarts project, Baltimore was also fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers involved with the program. Grade 9 student, Adam Kavanagh, budding photographer and computer whiz, documented the project from the start-up trips to the dig site in September until the final art exhibition in January. Adam popped in and out of the different classes as his own very busy schedule allowed. A number of parents and retired teachers also came to the school to lend a hand in ensuring the smooth running of the project. Principal Robin McGrath views the ArtsSmarts program as a most valuable and necessary one for his rural school, and he is thankful to all those who contributed to its success. "The excitement of the children, the interest of the parents and the involvement of the whole community in this project demonstrate how schools become successful. It takes people working together and sharing a common vision," Mr. McGrath commented.

Artist Julia Pickard working with Grade 3 students. Photo by Adam Kavanagh .

This type of ArtsSmarts project is not just a one shot deal with no carry over. In addition to introducing new skills and ideas to students and teachers, this arts program leaves behind a large supply of paints, brushes, clay and tools which are often so badly needed, especially in the primary and elementary areas.

"It's Not Just a Hole in the Ground, You Know!" was a most positive venture for Baltimore School and plans are already in the making for next year's application. In Year Two, the focus will be on the performing arts: drama, music, dance and storytelling. With the rich Irish heritage on the Southern Shore, there should be no shortage of ideas to fuel the fires for this project. Can't you just feel the excitement already?

Annette Mooney retired from teaching at Baltimore All Grade School in 2002. She currently lives in Ferryland.

Families and Financial Planning

by PAT HOGAN

"What kind of financial advice can you give to couples and families?" my wife Joanne asked me recently. Well that set me thinking. Here's what I came up with.

For All Couples

One of the most loving gifts that spouses (married, common-law or same-sex) can give each other is the gift of financial security. This means, at its most basic level, ensuring that financial protection is in place in the event of premature death, accident or illness of either breadwinner. Of these scenarios, the likelihood of financial setback resulting from the interruption of cash flow due to disability is statistically significant. So my first "gift of financial security" to my spouse and children is to turn to my NLTA group insurance for Long-Term Disability Insurance (Salary Continuation) to keep our income stream flowing in the case of accident or sickness.

Statistics show the likelihood of this happening is quite high, e.g. at age 40, over three out of ten males and over four out of ten females will experience a disability lasting longer than 90 days during their working lives. The loss of time off work is substantially in excess of our maximum sick leave "bank" of 195 days. Your ability to earn a regular dependable income is one of your most valued assets, and the means to enjoy all your other possessions and lifestyle. It makes sense to insure it. In fact, this coverage is automatic for teachers with 14.9 years of pensionable service or less; others must apply. So disability insurance that supplements your (Article 15) sick leave is a necessity that you would be wise to consider and foolhardy to dismiss.

Another aspect of the "gift of financial security" is life insurance coverage. For junior and mid-career teachers, our NLTA group term life insurance (A1 and A2) will provide large amounts of needed coverage at an affordable cost. Your financial advisor can do a "life insurance needs analysis" that will indicate an adequate and appropriate dollar amount. It should be sufficient to pay off the mortgage, all debts like car loans, credit cards, personal loans, student loans, and final expenses, etc. Even more insurance coverage is needed when children are still in their dependent years, i.e. when child-rearing and education expenses still lie ahead.

For senior teachers in their last 10 years of service, group term life insurance becomes less and less appropriate (and increasingly more costly). In their fifties, many teachers will have discharged their debts, paid off their mortgages and seen their children off to higher education. Large amounts of term life insurance no longer fit the changing needs of these individuals. This is the time to see your financial advisor and "change over" to individual permanent life insurance. Why? Simply because most group term (temporary) life insurance policies like our own A1 and A2 coverage terminate at age 65. Yet, most of us expect to live past our 65th birthday! An individual "whole life" (permanent) policy will pay regardless when we die, not if we die before age 65. For a fuller discussion of these ideas, see *The Bulletin* (Nov/03 issue pp.26-27).

Another gift would be the gift of sharing knowledge. Ideally, both partners should be conversant with the family's financial affairs. This avoids the scenario where one partner literally "hasn't got a clue" about the family's annual and monthly budgets, investments, insurance coverage, location of financial documents, bill-payment arrangements, debt levels, etc. This may mean one partner's willingness to relinquish control of this information and to encourage the other partner to take the time and interest to share this important information. It means discussing financial priorities, advance discussion of "big ticket" spending items, wise use of credit cards, agreement on discretionary spending limits, agreement on the pace of debt reduction, periodically reviewing your RRSP investment returns, some meeting of minds on both short-term and long-term financial goals, etc. Don't be surprised if you both differ in your views; some people are by inclination "savers" and some are "spenders". Your own family history and your lifetime of personal

habits and past experiences determine your attitude to many diverse financial matters.

This logically leads to having a financial plan. For many, this means using a Financial Security Advisor or Certified Financial Planner (CFP). A planner will: a) assist you to articulate your individual goals and to harmonize your couple goals; b) establish a baseline, set achievable objectives, work out an action plan; c) provide appropriate investment or insurance products in keeping with your goals; d) employ tax-reduction strategies; e) monitor the plan as it is implemented over time and assist in making changes as your circumstances change, etc. A professional financial planner also has the expertise and access to the tools to give you personalized financial projections factoring in taxes, inflation, different rates of return on investments, etc. based on your unique circumstances.

"... each person, regardless of his/her family situation, is unique in a financial sense. There is no 'one-size-fits-all' financial template."

A caring partner will also have some "long term" savings earmarked in advance for the predictable special expenses to come... your retirement finances, your children's higher education costs, a family wedding, care of family members with special needs, e.g. a disabled child or an elderly parent, etc. For many, this may mean setting up a spousal RRSP for the lower-income (and lower-pensioned) spouse and an RESP for the children.

Another gift to each other would be putting wills in place. This is even more important when young children are involved. Issues like provision for guardians, common disaster provisions, trust provisions for the financial care of children, etc. should be addressed by your lawyer.

These six ideas above apply to all types of "spousal partnerships", a generic term that includes married couples, unmarried (common-law) couples, and same-sex couples. Each type of partnership has its own legal status which varies between federal and provincial laws and even among the provinces themselves. For example, each province is responsible for passing its own laws respecting who may issue marriage licenses, and for laws respecting support, property division and inheritances.

To further complicate matters, both federal and provincial laws are evolving in both the political and legal arenas to reflect changing public mores. This is evidenced by the current public debate on same-sex marriage, civil unions and domestic partnerships. Only a legal professional with expertise in Newfoundland family law can provide up-to-date counsel in these matters.

For Common-Law Spouses: Special Issues

For those in common-law partnerships, you may choose to put in place a domestic contract called a "cohabitation agreement". This will spell out, among many things, the assets that you are both contributing to the relationship, your respective rights and obligations within the contract and procedures to be observed should the relationship break down.

You may wish to arrange your assets (your house, car(s), bank accounts, safety deposit box, cottage, etc.) to be held in "joint tenancy" with the right of survivorship. In the case of the death of one of you, these assets will pass automatically, promptly and without public disclosure to the survivor outside the will (avoiding probate tax) and cannot be contested.

Naming each other as "designated beneficiaries" in your life insurance policies, RRSPs, pension plans, etc. also will solidify your financial affairs should anything happen to either of you. Again, beneficiary designations are not public information and cannot be challenged after your death. The surviving partner will be protected, and your assets will pass to your partner as you would have intended.

Finally, as common-law partners, you will each want to make a will.

For Same-Sex Partners: Special Issues

For those in same-sex relationships, again you should seek professional legal advice for some of the same reasons noted above. Same-sex relationships are not treated the same as common-law unions under most provincial legislation. Instead of a "cohabitation agreement", same-sex partners may seek a legally-binding "private contract".

An estate plan is especially important for gay couples. This means each partner getting a will prepared by a lawyer (not a "legal will kit") whose practice gives him/her expertise in these matters. Since a will becomes a public document when probated, same-sex couples may wish to use other avenues (like the use of "joint tenancy" and the use of "beneficiary designations" as noted above) to effect their wishes, have their privacy respected and avoid having their will contested by family members after their death. Many same-sex couples choose to use life insurance to provide for their partners on death, instead of bequests through a will. On the death of one partner, the surviving same-sex partner is entitled to survivor pension benefits, as well as CPP survivor benefits and the CPP death benefit.

For Single Parent Families: Special Issues

For those who are single parents, there are a number of items that you will be concerned with:

a) Your will must be revised to reflect your new reality. Provision for a guardian for minor children and the financial care of children during their dependent years is critical should your children lose their custodial parent. Your lawyer will advise regarding setting up a trust, etc.

b) You will need to change your "beneficiary designation" on your life insurance policies, your RRSPs, and your pension plan.

c) Also examine how your assets are owned – are your house, car, property, bank accounts, cottage, safety deposit box, etc. still held jointly with your former spouse?

d) Your income tax preparation will also now consider such previously unused items as spousal support (taxable) and child support (non taxable) payments, as well as the "amount for an eligible dependent" credit. This credit, previously called "equivalent to spouse amount", is intended to provide tax relief to single taxpayers supporting other dependents. Legal fees for obtaining a divorce or drawing up a separation agreement are not deductible. Special tax rules apply in the year of separation respecting claims for the spousal amount, child care expenses, etc.

e) You will also want to reconsider your life insurance coverage. Since your former spouse represents an "insurable interest" to you, as the recipient of spousal support are you named as the irrevocable beneficiary of his/her life insurance policy? And are the premium-payment arrangements in your hands and under your control?

f) Having disability insurance in place is doubly important for a single parent. Should accident or sickness interrupt your monthly income flow, you have no partner now to help pay the bills.

For Single Persons: Special Issues

For the single person, financial planning also has some special concerns especially around estate planning. For someone with absolutely no living family members or relatives, it is still important to make a will if only to guard against dying intestate and forfeiting your assets to the Crown under the "escheat" process. Two suggestions would be: 1) Find a trusted friend, a professional executor or both; and 2) maintain up-to-date records in a safety deposit box that your executor can access promptly. In discussions with your lawyer, you may wish to set up a trust to manage charitable donations or arrange to gift your assets prior to your death. Another suggestion would be to discuss "powers of attorney" with your lawyer.

For the single person with parents, siblings, nieces and nephews, etc. financial planning may involve providing for retirement, assisting a young relative with education funding, (e.g. an RESP), charitable-giving using life insurance, assisting elderly parents financially, etc.

To conclude, each person, regardless of his/her family situation, is unique in a financial sense. There is no "one-size-fits-all" financial template. A "no cost-no obligation" one-hour meeting with a Financial Security Advisor or Certified Financial Planner can really be beneficial – if only to assure you that you are "on the right track" in your own personal situation.

Pat Hogan is a retired principal/teacher and a life member of the NLTA. After completing his Securities, Insurance and national Certified Financial Planner (CFP) exams, he is now a licensed Financial Security Advisor with Facey Financial Planning & Consulting. Pat would welcome inquiries, with no obligation, at 709-754-0413 or email: hogan@roadrunner.nf.net.

8TH ANNUAL WALK TO CURE DIABETES

June 13, 2004

Quidi Vidi Lake, St. John's. Registration to take place at the Legion 56, Pleasantville, St. John's between 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. For more information and to obtain a pledge sheet, please call Walk Coordinator, Kathy Power at 709-334-3312 or email her at stjohns@jdrf.ca.

SCIENCE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

July 21-23, 2004

Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick. The new Atlantic Canada Association of Science Educators (ACASE) announces its founding conference, "Listening to the Many Voices of Science". ACASE brings together science educators from elementary school through university to build a collaborative science education community and advocate for science education. Deadline for early registration is June 11. For information visit www.mta.ca/acase2004, e-mail: acase2004@mta.ca, Tel: 506-364-2588, or Fax: 506-364-2583.

SUMMER INSTITUTE IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

August 8-13, 2004

Killdevil Camp and Conference Centre, Gros Morne National Park. Educators are invited to participate in the Western Newfoundland Model Forest (WNMF) Partnership's Summer Institute in Environmental Education as we explore the Boreal Forest. This five-day learning experience is for educators of all disciplines and grades, and for students and new graduates in the field of education. For more information contact the WNMF at 709-637-7300 or e-mail wnmf@wnmf.com.

EDGEO EARTH SCIENCE TEACHERS WORKSHOP

August 9-10, 2004

Johnson GEO CENTRE, St. John's. A great opportunity for K-12 teachers to get some practical hands-on Earth Science knowledge in a fun environment. Participants will enjoy a variety of presentations both in a lecture setting and in the field with trips to Outer Cove and the Kelligrews quarry fossil site. For registration and further information contact Thomas Loader, Tel: 709-737-7898 or e-mail: thomas.loader@geocentre.ca.

PRACTICAL CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

August 17-18, 2004

St. John's. A two-day summer institute aimed at enhancing teachers' classroom discipline techniques. Topics include: preventative discipline techniques; dealing with disruptive and defiant students; handling high level incidents in class; tracking behavior and communicating with administration. Location: MUN Arts Annex, Room 1043. Fee: $100. Please make cheques payable to Practical Classroom Management Consulting, P.O. Box 2033, Pictou, Nova Scotia, B0K 1H0. Please attach mailing address, telephone info and e-mail with cheque. For further information e-mail pcmc@eastlink.ca.

TEACHER'S EDUCATION ADVENTURE

August 22-28, 2004

Gros Morne National Park. Learn the answers to many fascinating questions as you walk the Tablelands, peek into tide pools, and explore bogs, streams, and other wetlands in Gros Morne National Park. The Teacher's Education Adventure is offered by Parks Canada in partnership with the Department of Education, the Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association, Newfoundland and Labrador School Districts, the Red Ochre Regional Economic Board and the Gros Morne Co-operating Association. Registration: $350 per person (includes meals, accommodations at local motels, and travel during the Institute). For further information contact Dorothy Parsons, Education Specialist, Western Newfoundland and Labrador Field Unit, Parks Canada, Tel: 709-458-2417, Fax: 709-458-2059, E-mail: Dorothy.Parsons@pc.gc.ca.

NON-VERBAL LEARNING DISABILITIES WORKSHOP

October 8, 2004

Newfoundland Room, Mount Peyton Hotel, Grand Falls-Windsor. Dr. Dean Mooney (co-author of a new book with Dr. Byron Rourke), will be presenting a workshop entitled: "Nonverbal Learning Disabilities: Diagnosis and Interventions for Home and School". Early bird registration deadline is June 25, 2004. Copies of the registration form can be found at www.bvcc.k12.nf.ca. For more information contact Keith Adey, at 709-292-5727.

MUSIC SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCIL CONFERENCE

October 21-23, 2004

Holiday Inn, St. John's. Contact Mary Dinn, President and Conference Chair, Tel: 709-745-1253 or e-mail: mdinn@roadrunner.nf.net.

S.M.A.R.T. (SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACCESSING RECENT TECHNOLOGY) T3 REGIONAL CONFERENCE

October 22-23, 2004

Fairmont Hotel, St. John's. Join K-12 and college mathematics and science colleagues for two days of innovative professional development using Texas instruments and other educational technologies. Registration Fees: $65 (Early Bird); $75 (after June 15, 2004). For further details including online registration, contact the conference web site at www.stemnet.nf.ca/smart/.

Dates to Remember

June 2004

June 11-12	NLTA Executive Meeting
June 15	Deadline: Notification by board of acceptance/rejection of Deferred Salary Leave requests

July 2004

July 31	**Deadline:** NLTA Scholarship Applications.